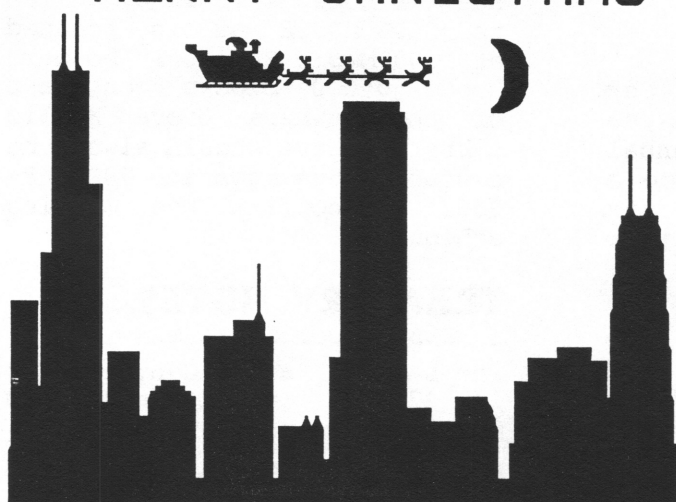


# MERRY CHRISTMAS



## NICE-TIMES NEWS

### CHICAGO AREA TIMEX USERS GROUP

Chicago Area Timex Users Group  
Volume 8, Number 6

Downers Grove, Illinois  
November/December 1994

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#### C.A.T.U.G. CLUB OFFICERS

Here is the list of 1994 club officers and how to contact them. The club has two strong SIGS, SPECTRUM/TS2068 and QL. If you have questions about either of these fine machines, or even the ZX81/TS1000/TS1500, call one of the officers. C=312, S=708.

POSITION	NAME	PHONE	PRIMARY FUNCTION
President	Nazir Pashtoon	S439-1679	The buck stops here...
Vice-President	Steve Cooper	S968-3553	Meeting Planning, etc.
Secretary	Larry Sauter	C763-5383	Records and Reporting
Treasurer	Frank Mills	S544-1918	Dues and Purchasing
Editor	Bob Swoger	S576-8068	Newsletter, BBS, etc.

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#### NICE-TIMES NEWS

## Nite-Times Information

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The Nite-Times News is the newsletter of the Chicago Area Timex Users Group. For an annual fee of \$12.00 you can become a CATUG member and receive six newsletters each year. Write your check payable to:

**FRANK MILLS  
417 S 47th AVE**

The Chicago Area Timex Users Group is pleased to exchange newsletters with other Timex and Sinclair supporting user groups at no charge. Send all newsletter requests to:

**CATUG EDITOR BOB SWOGER  
613 PARKSIDE CIRCLE  
STREAMWOOD IL 60107-1647**

If you desire to reprint any articles that appear here, please provide credit to the author and this newsletter.

We encourage your user group to copy this newsletter and distribute it at your regular meetings to your members free of any charge as we believe that this will encourage better meeting attendance. If you are a user group that feels as we do, please let us know in your newsletter so that we might do this for our members and keep our attendance up.

Articles originating from our group may be downloaded from our BBS and reprinted.

### CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

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**Al Feng  
Frank Mills  
Larry Sauter  
Bob Swoger, K9WVY**

### CLUB MEETINGS

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The Chicago Area Timex Users Group meets on the THIRD Saturday of each month at the home of our meeting coordinator Steve Cooper in Downers Grove, Illinois from 1:00 to 5:00 PM.

Steve's home is lovingly called the CLUB HOUSE and is located at 1300 Maple Street in Downers Grove just 2 blocks southwest of the Downers Grove Public Library. Steve should always be contacted evenings at 708/968-3553 to confirm the meeting schedule.

### TREASURY NOTES

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The balance as of Jan. 1, 1994 is \$364.43. Our current paid membership stands at 19.

**Frank Mills, Treasurer  
Chicago Area Timex Users Group**

### SECRETARY'S NotePad

---

**November 22, 1994**

The meeting began at 2:30 PM. Present were Nazir Pashtoon, Frank Mills, Steve Cooper, Abed Kahale, Bob Swoger and Larry Sauter.

It was proposed that Lee Thoresen or Mark Dorinson might become the backup librarian for Abed. Mark has since written and expressed an interest.

Abed received a communication from Jeff Kuhlmann of New York proposing that ZXir QLive Alive! and UPDATE! become one publication. Don Lambert, Abed Kahale and Bob Swoger all seem to agree that should not happen. Reasons were stated which mainly concerned the different objectives of the two publications. Also, the input from readers that no longer had a user group to depend on was that they preferred having two publications.

Bob is working on a new version release V6.0 of LogiCall. A description of the LogiCall Exec was given to the members telling of how the new LogiCall can change back and forth between the TS2068 and Spectrum ROMs from any of the 5 drives simple by pressing 'N' and ENTER. Bob put a Timex disk in drive 0 and a

Timex disk in drive 0 and a Spectrum disk in drive 1 and demonstrated that it worked. The TS2068 booted up with the brief LogiCall CAtalog on the screen indicating the presence of the Timex ROM. Bob then pressed 1 and the LogiCall Exec presented the CAtalog of the disk in drive 1 again in the brief Timex mode (no MC files showing). He then pressed 'N' and ENTER. The screen winked and the full CAtalog appeared on the screen (MC files and all) indicating that the Spectrum ROM was now running the system.

Another feature of LogiCall V6.0 was borrowed from a feature Bob saw on the screen of his wife's MSDOS machine when she ran Word Perfect 5.1. Word Perfect can preview a document without putting it into the WP to process. LogiCall could do this before V6.0 but only in the 32 column mode. If taswi.C is on the current disc, LogiCall V6.0 will now display the file in 64 column mode.

Also reported was the fact that the Glenside Club wanted to give a try at putting LogiCall on their machines to make life a little easier.

Tim Swenson told Bob through Internet that he would send Hard Copy of the QL Hacker to John Donaldson through snail mail in the future. The latest issue of QL Hacker is always on the club BBS. See the BBS info under GATOR's Twisted Pair elsewhere in this newsletter.

Bob Swoger has been cleaning up pictures in his collection of RLEs and has made a program to display to the screen of a LarKen equipped TS2068 all the pictures on a disk for fast complete view of all the records. Nazir is planning to give a demo of Spectrum, QL and other emulators on an AMIGA and also a Spectrum emulator on his QL. That will make for a busy afternoon!

Bob next demonstrated a word processor called Spectral writer given to us by Dave Lebowitz on a stringy floppy. Don Lambert introduced this word processor to our group stating that even though it looks like TASWORD in many respects, it keeps up with his typing speed much better than Tasword. Bob says that Don may be right, though Bob himself can't type fast enough to cause Tasword to fail. Don preferred MSCRIPT over Tasword for this reason.

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 PM so we could get on with the Spectral Writer demo.

### December 10, 1994

Meeting began at approximately 2:30 P.M. at the home of Bob Swoger. Members present: Phillip Kwitkowski, Cy Herre, Abed Kahale, Larry Sauter, Bob Swoger, Nazir Pashtoon, Jeff Decourtney, John Shepard, John Donaldson, Bobby Muth, and Steve Cooper.

It was reported that George Chambers sent to Abed a tape library and all the master copies of Sync Link although some of them are missing and a 35 pound box of magazines and periodicals to Don Lambert that were magazines from England. Don didn't have a chance to go through the box as of this meeting.

George sent a letter to out of town members from the Toronto users group about the demise of that organization and their attempt to put their financial house in order and be fair about the return of subscription money etc. A lot of the members that remain are ZX81 users and they will meet in the future to keep the group active and it is unusual that the group has come full circle, back to the venerable ZX81.

Bob got up on his soap box and told it like it is. If you have a healthy user group and you want it to continue flourishing, encourage it and



share the work load as much as possible for the good of the group. If you start preaching or talking gloom and doom then that is what will happen to your user group. Keep the spirit high and keep on Timin...

Butch Weinberg called Bob and told him that he wants to get rid of all his Timex equipment and there is a conflict as far as timing to acquire the Timex equipment and maybe we will have some Timex equipment to spread around the club, soon. Butch was one of the original members of the CATUG and he went into the IBM fold because he could afford to.

Bob is about to release 6.0 of L.B1. The latest is a 64 column Tasword word processor output, with taswide on the disc. With a Spectrum disc in drive 3 you hold N down and enter, and it boots on the fly, every DOS key is now a single input key to get something done. Bob says LogiCall is an executive level program.

We were fortunate to be able to finally see the 3D program and enjoyed the visual treat of a 3D program on a Timex computer.

We discussed the need of a calling tree in case a meeting is to be moved to another date or location, whereby if somebody wants to change something and the next person calls the next guy on the list.

Nazir brought to the meeting a handsome Grid computer that was very impressive, to say the least. It is a very rugged piece of equipment.

The meeting was adjourned so we could get on to the interesting demo of a 3D visual program, and the Grid computer.

Larry Sauter, Acting Secretary  
Chicago Area Timex Users Group

## From the EDITOR'S Disk

---

SIG line found in my Users' Group  
E-mail:

Man is the only 150 pound non-linear, programmable, servo-mechanism that can be reproduced using non-skilled labor.

Bob Swoger, Editor  
Chicago Area Timex Users Group

## GATOR's TWISTED PAIR

---

!!! R E M E M B E R !!!  
We have a 24 hour BBS and encourage you to exchange mail and contribute to the Download Section. Use it and have fun!

Call the BBS at 708-632-5558 and register. On your next call your security level will be increased to 5 on this RBBS and you will be able to have most privileges.

Bob Swoger, SYSop  
Chicago Area Timex Users Group

## ITEMS FOR SALE THROUGH THE CLUB

---

It has come to our attention that some LarKen Users are using something less than Version 3 firmware. The club will supply updated EPROMs, SYSTEM DISKS, and MANUALS for just \$5 which includes shipping and handling, free if ordered with LogiCall or Spectrum ROM.

If you are a LarKen LKDOS owner and would like a SPECTRUM V2 kit for your system we will supply an EPROM, socket and 74HCT32 for \$12 which includes shipping and handling. The install instructions are in your LarKen manual. We shall not be responsible for your install job. AERCO owners need only the SPECTRUM EPROM for \$10

If you have a mismatch between you LarKen DOS EPROM and your



Western Digital Controller chip, we will send you the correct one for free on behalf of our friends Rod Gowen of RMG and Larry Kenny of LarKen. You should be using L3 EPROMs with WD1770 controller chips or L3F EPROMs with WD1772 controller chips. Check it out! Call in requests to Bob Swoger at W708-576-8068 H708-837-7957

## SPECIAL DEALS AND BUYS

NAP\_Ware (Nazir A. Pashtoon's new endeavor) announces the availability of all Timex or QL PAL (Programmable Array Logic) chips. If interested, call him evenings on 708-439-1679.

LogiCall Integrated Software Ensemble easy operating system for LKDOS in both TS2068 and Spectrum modes includes LogiCall 5.0 TASWORD TWO V2.8, VU-CALC V1.6, VU-FILE and MTERM2 Drivers modified for LogiCall, DISKS.B1 TAPES.B1 steprt.B1 HEADER.BT (tape header reader by Nazir Pashtoon) FORMAT.B MOVE.BL and more all on 2 SSDD disks for \$15. You must specify your LKDOS EPROM version. If you already have a copy you are encouraged to distribute copies to other LarKen LKDOS users for as you see by the price we are not in the business of making money on it, just making LarKen's LKDOS even better! Call in requests to Rod Gowen of RMG Enterprises or Frank Davis of Mechanical Affinity.

So you like to fly? The 747 Flight Simulator for Spectrum by Derek Ashton of DACC sold over 40K copies in EUROPE. Requires Spectrum Emulator. At this time supplied on LarKen SSDD disk only for \$10 which goes to Derek Ashton, now working at MOTOROLA with Bob Swoger. Call in requests to Bob at W708-576-8068 H708-837-7957

# ARTICLES

## RAMDISK FOR PHILLIP

by  
Bob Swoger

Phillip Kwitkowski is one of our 15 year old TS2068 user members. It seems that when ever Phillip makes a wish, his wish comes true. At the Dayton ComputerFest Phil tried to get a RAMDISK from Mechanical Affinity but that RAMDISK couldn't be found. Things seemed pretty grim as to him getting a LarKen RAMDISK. Just like the U.K. folks Clive made his computers for, Phil's home has 'empty coal buckets'.

Just before Christmas, a package arrived in Christmas wrapping paper. Inside was a LarKen RAMDISK with all the RAM chips on board with no note or letter. The return address said Joan Kealy. I called Joan and asked "What gives?". She said "didn't your daughter tell you? I called last week?". No, she hadn't told me Joan had called. Joan said that she had trouble with the RAM DISK ever since she bought it and that if I could fix it I could have it, she really didn't need it.

I plugged it into my system and sure enough, it didn't work. There were bad solder connections all over the place and a couple of foil traces had been broken. One foil was missing. These were repaired with jumpers. I fixed all the bad solder connections on the RAM chips and the PC board at the connectors. I plugged it in and powered up the TS2068. I did a RAND USR 100: FORMAT "8", and the RAMDISK formatted with the familiar 'OK'. I loaded it up with LogiCall, MOVE, FORMAT, DISKS.B1, TAPES.B1, steprt.B1 and others. All worked fine. This would be a gift from Joan to Phillip.

I took the RAMDISK over to Phillip's home. We plugged it in and powered it up. CRC ERRORS! Back to the soldering iron. A few

more solder connections and back to the TS2068. It formatted again and we loaded it up with programs again.

All was fine, so we plugged in the modem and printer interface. The RAMDISK crashed again!

The socket on the RAMDISK had RTV all over the connections to the PC board. This is where the foil kept breaking. I tried to peel the RTV off the board but in my mind I could just see all the foil being torn off the board, so, I quit trying that.

I took the soldering iron and tried to melt the RTV. It worked! I melted off all the RTV and voila - the real problem reared its ugly head. The original builder of the board was too lazy to solder all the board connections to the connector. Only the few connections that were electrically connected to the RAMDISK were soldered. Every time the connector was stressed, the foil on the board received that stress and the foil would break.

I soldered the over sixty connections between the connector and the PC board, repaired the remaining broken foils and the RAMDISK now seems to have mechanical integrity.

The moral? If your RAMDISK crashes now and then, take a look-see at the solder connections between the connector and the PC board to determine if your RAMDISK was assembled in the same manner. If it was, take the time to solder ALL the connections between the RAMDISK board and the connector.

#### More QXL Notes

by  
Al Feng

Well, I finally got my working copy of SMSQ 2.47 [the QXL's operating system (OS) which mimics the QL's QDOS] -- very satisfactory, but not perfect.

First, the excessive keyboard rollover which really made the QXL difficult to use has been corrected. The NUMLOCK can be left "on" (good news if you prefer using the keypad for numeric input).

A spurious character generation still occurs when TaskMAX (DRDOS) is used to TASK SWITCH between DOS and SMSQ. Again, this is corrected by pressing the ESCape\_KEY and/or ESCape + ConTROl\_E key combination. Since I know how to "correct" the problem on-the-fly, I can live with it. When it becomes too much of a nuisance, I may opt to upgrade to OS/2 WARP.

A minor disappointment is the fact that SBASIC barely accommodates the TURBO compiler. Relatively short and simple programs can be compiled (v3.24); but, long and complex programs return ERRORS which do not occur when compiled on a "regular" QL. I suspect that the LIBERATOR may also have a problem running under SBASIC.

Needless to say, I'll probably be using a "regular" QL in tandem with the QXL for some time to come until all the irregularities are resolved (if ever).

I keep hoping that another version of the SMSQ OS will be released which better "fills" a VGA screen rather than what I am getting. Now, this may simple be a matter of my not knowing how to configure the single SMSQ module for different video displays. I don't recall seeing any documentation on this (i.e., how to use the "config" program which is now included); but, that does not meant that it isn't there ... somewhere.

Since my VGA card seems to be able to interpret CGA programs so that they fill the screen as if using a high res CGA monitor, I naively presume that it would be possible to "re-write" the SMSQ video so that the QL's standard display will also "fill" a standard VGA monitor.

Now, hoping for Christmas-in-July, I would like to think that the firmware development that has gone into the soon-to-be-released (probably released by the time this gets into print) MIRACLE MASTERPIECE ENHANCED GRAPHICS CARD will be used on the next SMSQ release. After all, if the MASTERPIECE CARD generates a similarly scaled display on a VGA monitor as what the current SMSQ video driver manages, then that would surely be a major disappointment. Having more colors in MODE 4 (80-column) is really a trivial enhancement if the display size remains diminutive.

#### NETworking the QXL

Since my preferred version of TURBO is 2.00, I was originally perplexed when I could not get the NETwork PORTs to function.

It turns out that there is some incompatibility between the SMSQ code and older versions of the TURBO TOOLKIT. I have found that older TURBO TOOLKITs also cause some problems with the MAKE\_DIR command; but, MAKE\_DIR can be made viable by re-invoking TK2\_EXT.

Before the (SUPER)GOLD CARD and the QXL, the only type of NETworking that could be realistically considered was SERVER-CLIENT. This is because a QL is really crippled when FSERVE is invoked to make that particular QL a FILESERVER.

I have found that the QXL and (SUPER)GOLD CARD have sufficient clock speeds that each can be declared as FILESERVERs for the other, thus making a PEER-TO-PEER NETwork a viable reality.

Consequently, my QXL's BOOT program includes the following statements:

```
NET 1
FSERVE
NFS_USE NDK, N2_flp1, N2_flp2_,
N2_ram1_, N2_ram2_, N2_ram3_,
N2_ram4_, N3_ram1_, N3_mdvl_
```

And, the BOOT for my GOLD CARDed QL includes the following statements:

```
NET 2
FSERVE
NFS_USE WIN, N1_win1, N1_win2_,
N1_win3_, N1_win4_, N1_win5_,
N1_ram1_, N1_ram2_, N3_ram1_
```

You should note two things:

First, if you do not have a hard disk (interface), you can declare up to eight "win()" devices for the client. The fact that you can have up to eight devices might not be obvious, but it was there in the original, minuscule TOOLKIT2 manual.

If "win()" is already a device (as on the QXL), then you cannot declare "NFS\_USE WIN" since this would conflict with an existing system device name or QDOS keyword.

Since the QXL uses "win()" devices, my preferred choice is to use "ndk()" for my NETworked devices (after fdk/hdk). "NDK" is an abbreviation for N(etwork)D(is)K.

While you can use any device\_label, I quickly found that it is best to use a three-letter abbreviation. If you use a three-letter designation, you can LOAD/SAVE/etc. from within PSION programs (and, most others) along the NETwork. If you choose a non-three-letter designation, the program will probably not recognize it.

DEV\_USE has been found to be limited in function. Using DEV\_USE to re-label your non-three-letter designation would cripple the NETwork, in part, because functions such as WCOPY will currently return an "in use" error message. While DEV\_USE does allow for LOAD/SAVE, using it to re-label decreases the overall number of devices you can use.

#### DEV\_USE

You may have read elsewhere that DEV\_USE is a kluge for older programs that cannot directly access sub\_DIRECTories.



Inevitably, you will want to re-configure your programs to access a "dev()" instead of "flp2\_" for data files.

My QXL's boot includes these lines:

```
30 DEV_USE 1,WIN2_doc_  
31 DEV_USE 2,WIN2_dbf_  
32 DEV_USE 3,WIN2_aba_
```

Very unoriginal.

As you can see, I have duplicated the suffix as the sub\_DIRECTORY prefix.

Once you re-configure your programs, you don't have to remember these DEV\_USE calls unless you want to access them from the command line prompt.

You can cascade DEV\_USE designations; but, I currently don't see the point of it since I currently have specific sub\_DIRECTORIES for specific programs.

#### FINALLY

Because I often make "\_lis" files, I have found it more convenient to have my copy of Quill configured so that it still looks to "flp1\_" for the printer\_dat file. Of course, this demands that I remember (!?) to have an "old" start\_up disk in the drive (I have forgotten on a couple of occasions, already!).

HAPPY TRAILS, AND COMPUTING, TO YOU ...

## ADS

To put an AD in the BBS and newsletter, upload a file with the filename.filetype:

CATUGxxx.ADS

where xxx is your initials.

!!! Our ADS are free !!!

Your ADS appear in FOUR different newsletters!

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 description, owners manual, or  
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